Implementation of Customer Journey Mapping in Digital Business Development

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Abstract: *This study outlines all stages of implementing the Customer Journey Map (CJM) system in business and proposes a set of solutions for its systematization. It also examines the key stages a potential customer undergoes on the path to making a purchase, along with potential challenges they may encounter. The research covers essential aspects of CJM implementation, such as touchpoints, customer interviews, pain points, and customer emotional responses. As a result of the study, it is concluded that utilizing CJM enables business owners to gain a deeper understanding of their customers, thereby improving service quality. Additionally, a correlation is identified between analyzing the target audience and the efficiency and profitability of a business. Customer expectations regarding interactions with a company are analyzed, leading to the conclusion that customer - centricity is of paramount importance. This article may be particularly useful for entrepreneurs seeking to enhance the efficiency of their businesses and for emerging companies aiming to establish their niche.*

1. Introduction

Research conducted by Tech Pro Research [1] indicates that 70% of companies invest time and resources in digital transformation. The significance of digital business is difficult to overestimate, as digitalization provides a significant advantage—it enables companies to scale. An individual opening a physical store near their home is unlikely to achieve greater success. than one launching an online marketplace. The larger the potential target audience, the more promising the enterprise. Consequently, many companies strive to establish their presence in the digital space. Another advantage of digitalization is automation, which, in turn, reduces costs.

However, merely operating online is not sufficient for a business to succeed. It is crucial to understand what should be sold and to whom. A tool that can assist in this process is the Customer Journey Map (CJM). The objective of this study is to explore this tool and analyze its integration into business operations. The relevance of the research is driven by the rapid pace of digitalization and increasing competition in the online environment. A successful business model must be customer - centric, and CJM can facilitate this approach.

2. Methods and Materials

This study employs methods such as data collection, comparison, structuring, and analysis. The analysis is based on research conducted by Tech Pro Research [1] on business digitalization, as well as materials [2 - 5] concerning the implementation of the Customer Journey Map tool. Analysis of prior research reveals a growing need for digitalization among companies and heightened competition in the digital environment, which, in turn, has highlighted the demand for personalized business tools. The article provides a detailed examination of the CJM system and a step - by - step plan for its implementation in business. Additionally, a table is presented, which, once completed, serves as a result of analyzing the potential customer's journey.

3. Results and Discussion

Digital business is an entrepreneurial activity that utilizes digital tools for the creation, promotion, and sale of goods and services in an online format. A business can be initially built in the digital space or gradually transition to digitalization. Popular digital business types include web design, industrial consulting, e – commerce Accompanying the customer through all CJM stages, asking about their emotions and difficulties at each step, social media and content marketing, direct delivery, event planning, and virtual assistants [4, 5].

For the successful development of any digital business, the following elements are essential:
1) Automation. Automation allows businesses to save valuable resources such as time. Routine tasks can be delegated to AI. This requires an in - depth analysis of the company's processes to begin their automation.
2) Training. The implementation of any new technology necessitates staff training and skill development. Without proper training, new technologies may be ineffective, as employees may not utilize them correctly.
3) Flexibility. Flexibility is the foundation of a successful business in a rapidly changing world. Digital businesses can adapt to shifting conditions more easily than traditional ones, as digital tools and technologies are inherently more adaptable and often require fewer resources for modifications.
4) Investment in Digital Marketing. Investing in digital marketing is essential, along with training teams in modern strategies—ranging from social media management to SEO optimization.
5) Growth. Digital business offers unlimited growth potential. Over the past fifteen years, digital transformation has steadily expanded across both developed and developing countries. Industries such as tourism, banking, entertainment, and retail have been at the forefront of this shift. Sectors like healthcare, transportation, and insurance are also rapidly embracing digitalization [1].

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To enhance the efficiency of a digital business, the Customer Journey Map (CJM) is integrated into its strategy. CJM is a visual representation of the customer's journey, beginning with the realization of a need to make a purchase and ending with their actions and emotions post - purchase. When making a decision, the customer interacts with the company and the product through various touchpoints, basing their choices on the conclusions they draw. Marketers analyze this experience to improve service quality, ensuring that the customer returns. For instance, after a client's first visit to a cosmetology office, they may be offered a discount for a subsequent appointment or other incentives. Thus, the Customer Journey Map method focuses on understanding customer motives, needs, and emotions. This tool is designed to analyze the customer experience throughout their interaction with a product. In marketing, CJM records customer actions and identifies the challenges they face when attempting to resolve them, evaluates their emotions at each stage, and facilitates their decision - making process.

A well - structured CJM helps resolve issues and includes:
1) The stages a customer goes through on the path to making a purchase (Table 1).

Table 1: An example of the stages of the customer's journey to purchase (compiled by the author based on [2])

Planning	Decision	Visit	Further Interaction
Formation of the need to visit a shopping center (either intentional or spontaneous)	Evaluation of various shopping centers (based on personal experience)	Shopping Restaurants Entertainment and leisure Parking	Impressions from purchases and entertainment zones, sharing photos on social media

For example, using CJM for a shopping mall visitor, it is possible to trace their journey from deciding to visit the shopping center to subscribing to the mall's social media account to track promotions.

2) Possible barriers that help understand how to overcome them. For instance, customers may want to know the cost of services, but if the company does not provide the information promptly, they may turn to competitors.
3) Weak points and ways to address them. For example, a customer wants to buy a microwave, visits the store, but feels overwhelmed by excessive technical information and the abundance of choices. They may seek assistance from a consultant, but if the consultant lacks sufficient knowledge and cannot explain the differences between models, the customer may leave. If CJM identifies such an issue, staff training should be conducted, followed by an evaluation of how well the information has been absorbed.
4) Service quality assessment. This is achieved using a Service Blueprint—a business process map that overlays CJM. It helps determine where and how processes need to be adjusted, whether a new process should be introduced to enhance interaction, and which department is responsible for each stage and touchpoint with the customer.
5) Information necessary for launching a new service or product. When introducing a new offering, a company lacks real data and experience, making it essential to step into the customer's shoes and navigate the entire journey before creating a detailed scenario of their expected actions. For example, if the new product involves factory tours, it is necessary to outline the route, define what will be presented, and determine what infrastructure needs to be developed.
6) Customer interaction points with the company. After recognizing the need to make a purchase, a customer begins noticing relevant advertisements. They may then call the company, visit in person, browse the website, or seek recommendations from acquaintances. To make a final decision, they compare product information from different sellers, including prices, specifications, and reviews. When creating a CJM, it is crucial to identify touchpoints—where and how the customer interacts with the company or product (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Contact points CJM [2]

7) Communication strategy. Based on CJM, a step - by - step communication plan with the customer is developed, detailing interaction channels and methods of capturing consumer attention.

Before purchasing tiles in a store, a customer studies trends and design projects, selects a store, and then moves chaotically inside. At each stage, communication should be structured in a way that simplifies decision - making for the buyer. The customer journey toward a purchase consists of the following stages:
1) Need recognition
2) Information search
3) Alternative evaluation
4) Purchase
5) Consumption
6) Disposal

The structure of the Customer Journey Map is developed in a table, which can be adjusted in width or depth depending on the specific business requirements and objectives (Table 2).

Table 2: CJM structure (compiled by the author based on [2])

Need Recognition	Information Search	Alternative Evaluation	Purchase	Consumption
Task/ Motivation				
Actions				
Touchpoints				
Emotions				
Pain Points				

Contact points are moments of interaction between a customer and a product. These points can be online or offline, and a company may not have influence over all of them.

Customer thoughts and actions involve analyzing what a potential consumer considers and does at each contact point. This analysis requires data, which can be obtained through surveys, questionnaires, and observations.

Customer pain points are arguments against making a purchase. For example, if the delivery cost of a discounted piece of furniture is half the price of the item itself, this may discourage the customer from completing the purchase.

Figure 2: An example of a completed CJM structure for choosing a cable/digital television provider [2].

To create a CJM, six steps must be taken:
1) Study the audience. Understanding the target audience is the foundation of any business. This is done through surveys, market analysis, and existing research. The result is a clear profile of the potential customer, including gender, age, education, and marital status. For example, a single young man aged 18 - 25 with higher education who is interested in an internship at an IT company.
2) Create profiles of typical customers. This step specifies potential customers and divides them into conditional groups based on fundamental parameters such as gender, age, region, family composition, profession, income, and hobbies. Preferences regarding the final product are also considered. For instance, one group of potential consumers may be looking for budget options, while another may be willing to pay more for quality and aesthetics.

3) Conduct interviews. Interviews are usually conducted with three groups:
- Customers—those who have used or are currently using the product.
- Non - users—those who have never interacted with the product and may not even be aware of its existence.

- Experts—those who have professional knowledge of the product. For example, in the case of gel nail polish, this would be nail technicians, while for paint, it would be professional painters.

Interviews can be conducted in one of two ways, or both can be used:
- Asking the customer about their interaction with a specific product or the brand as a whole.
- Accompany the customer through all CJM stages. Ask about their emotions and difficulties at each step. For instance, a task could be set for the customer to make purchases in a cosmetics store. Each step should be observed, following them into the store, watching how they select products, and asking why they rejected certain items. It is important to see whether they seek assistance from sales managers and whether they are satisfied with the service. Challenges they face should also be noted. All results must be documented, either in writing or through audio recordings. For example, if the study involves a restaurant, the entire journey—from table reservation to bill payment—can be analyzed. The convenience of booking, the restaurant's atmosphere, staff attitude, pricing, and food quality can all be evaluated. Customers may also be asked what changes they would make to the business, what they find lacking, or what seems unnecessary. This helps make the customer journey as smooth as possible, increasing the likelihood of repeat visits.
4) Identify key stages. After conducting surveys, the key stages identified may differ from initial expectations.
5) Select customer stories. After the interviews, different customer journeys through various contact points can be selected to create individual case studies. For instance, one customer may have ordered a product online, while another visited a physical office. Based on this data, marketers can develop a tailored action plan for each customer.
6) Document everything on the map:
- Profiles of potential customers and their motivations when choosing a service or product.
- Their journeys and the stages they go through on the way to purchase.
- Emotions and problems they encounter.
- Solutions for each issue or barrier [2, 3].

To draw conclusions about the necessity of using CJM, an analysis of customer survey results [6] regarding their expectations from interactions with companies will be conducted, and statistical data will be structured.

Customer attitude toward data processing: According to the study [6], 63% of consumers want companies requesting personal data to explain why it is needed, how it will be processed, and how it will be stored. To maintain their reputation, companies should handle collected information carefully and prevent it from being shared with third parties.

Customer attitude toward personalization: 70% of consumers [6] are willing to engage in long - term cooperation only with companies that understand their needs. Consumers are interested in ensuring that businesses are aware of their opinions about products and services. This can be achieved through simple surveys, questionnaires, and CJM implementation.

Customer attitude toward contact points: Customers consider seamless interaction at all stages to be crucial, and 75% of consumers [6] pay attention to the design and usability of a company's website. A user - friendly interface and quick response from customer support significantly influence customer loyalty and the company's reputation.

Customer attitude toward service quality: For businesses, retaining loyal customers is essential, as statistical data [6] indicates that returning customers spend 31% more on average and are 50% more likely to try a new product or service. High - quality service can help turn new customers into regular ones.

Customer attitude toward poor service: Low - quality service can harm a company's reputation and lead to a decline in revenue. A customer who encounters incompetent staff or subpar products is unlikely to return. Poor service can result in the loss of not just one customer but a much larger group, as statistics show [6] that 10.7% of consumers share negative feedback on social media, while 33.7% discuss negative experiences with acquaintances, the majority (60%) of whom tend to trust recommendations from people they know.

To determine the necessity of CJM, statistical data [6] was analyzed:
- 78% of CJMs focus on issues such as low service quality and ensuring seamless interaction at every contact point.
- 52% of marketers adjust their sales strategies after implementing CJM [6].

Thus, customer expectations play a key role in shaping a successful business. The end consumer is the primary factor to consider when developing a business strategy. The better a company understands customer needs and pain points, the more successful and long - lasting their interaction will be. A satisfied customer brings value to the company. Consumers expect high - quality service at every stage of interaction with a business and are willing to pay more for it.

4. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that Customer Journey Mapping (CJM) is a vital tool for digital businesses seeking to thrive in a competitive landscape. A business cannot be designed to cater to everyone; therefore, understanding the target audience, their needs, and their expectations is essential for enhancing efficiency and profitability. Service personalization plays a key role in this process, requiring an in - depth analysis of customer profiles, emotions, and pain points. Such an approach allows businesses to identify critical aspects of the sales process and optimize its effectiveness. Additionally, audience analysis enables the strategic use of tools such as targeted advertising and specialized promotional offers, ensuring alignment with customer preferences and market demands.

Digital business offers significant market potential but is highly competitive. Key niches, such as food delivery and related services, are predominantly controlled by large

corporations. Achieving success in this environment requires either introducing an entirely new product or delivering an offering that precisely meets consumer needs. CJM provides a structured framework for studying these needs, enabling businesses to refine their strategies accordingly.

When creating a CJM, it is crucial to clearly define its purpose and the specific challenges it aims to address. Each market segment and customer group requires a tailored approach, as different consumers have unique touchpoints, pain points, and responses to various stimuli. Making assumptions about customers or projecting personal preferences onto them can lead to ineffective decision - making. Instead, businesses should rely on data - driven insights, obtained through thorough customer research and structured surveys.

Ultimately, CJM serves as a strategic roadmap for engaging with customers, grounded in systematic data collection. Whether in a simplified or highly detailed form, its effectiveness grows with the level of comprehensiveness and the variety of scenarios it encompasses. Beyond improving service quality, CJM functions as a mechanism for ongoing optimization, helping businesses identify and correct inefficiencies before they escalate. By deepening their understanding of customer behavior, companies can enhance service delivery, boost customer satisfaction, and foster long - term loyalty, ensuring sustainable growth in an increasingly digital marketplace.

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